United Nations

Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

• Security Council urges Mozambican Government and RENAMO to finalize "precise timetable" for demobilization of armed troops, formation of new unified armed forces and holding of elections; strongly urges both sides to guarantee ONUMOZ's freedom of movement and verification capabilities.

• France, Spain, United Kingdom and United States call for tightened sanctions against Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) if Bosnian Serbs do not sign peace plan; Lord Owen to travel to Skojpe and Athens for talks between Greece and former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

• Secretary-General, in Italy, tells staff of ILO International Training Centre that their efforts and responsibilities have "crucial importance" for development and international cooperation.

• UNHCR launches airlift to aid 50,000 people displaced by fighting in Azerbaijan.

• Cyprus protests killing of National Guard in buffer zone of Nicosia by Turkish soldier; says incident could affect resumption of 24 May negotiations on solution of Cyprus problem.

• Party of Democratic Kampuchea has allegedly left its compound in Phnom Penh due to security considerations, according to UNTAC spokesman.

• Some 900,000 displaced people in Rwanda to face major humanitarian catastrophe if immediate needs are not met, warns International Committee of Red Cross.

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The Security Council this afternoon urged the Mozambican Government and the Mozambique National Resistence Movement (RENAMO) to finalize, in consultation with the Secretary-General, "the precise timetable" for the full

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implementation of the General Peace Agreement. That agreement calls for the parties to assemble and demobilize their armed troops, to form new unified armed forces and to hold elections.

In resolution 818 (1993) adopted unanimously, the Council also stressed the importance of facilitating the free, efficient and effective operation of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ). That could be achieved by the early signature of the status of forces agreement between the Government of Mozambique and the United Nations.

The Council strongly appealed to RENAMO and the Government to allow an investigation of all cease-fire violations and to ensure freedom of movement of people and goods. It also welcomed the initiative of both parties to convene as soon as possible a meeting between the Mozambican President and the President of RENAMO to address major issues pertaining to peace in Mozambique.

In his report to the Council, dated 2 April, the Secretary-General stated that the elections originally planned for October would have to be rescheduled. He also expressed concern over the delay in the deployment of formed units of ONUMOZ. The example of ONUMOZ, he wrote, demonstrated the importance of a quick response by troop-contributing countries to United Nations requests.

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The Bosnian Serbs must sign the peace plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina and end all military attacks, the Permanent Representatives of France, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States to the United Nations have said in a letter, dated 12 April, to the Security Council President. The four countries said that if the Bosnian Serbs implement the plan in good faith, sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) might be lifted; otherwise, sanctions should be tightened and the country isolated.

A draft resolution detailing these options -- co-sponsored by France, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States and five other Council members -- has been circulating among the Council's members. However, action on its adoption has been postponed at the request of the Russian Federation, according to the letter. The resolution should be voted on, without a compliance period, before the end of the month if the Bosnian Serbs do not sign the peace plan, the letter suggests.

Meanwhile, Lord Owen, Co-Chairman of the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia, left New York for London this evening, where he would meet Reginald Bartholomew, the United States Special Envoy, and Vitaliy Churkin, the Special Envoy of the Russian Federation.

According to spokesman Fred Eckhard, Lord Owen was also expected to visit Skopje on 22 April and Athens on 23 April for talks between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

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The efforts and responsibilities of the International Labour Organization (ILO) had "crucial importance" for development and international cooperation, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today told the staff of the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO). He left Rome this morning to address the Centre's Staff and course participants in the Italian city of Turin.

The Secretary-General went on to say that the Centre was an important instrument for facing the challenges of the twenty-first century through training programmes related to development, peace-keeping and human rights activities of the United Nations system.

The training activities of the ILO Turin Centre, which was established in 1965, are designed in response to the priority needs of member States. From the technical and vocational training it offered in the earlier years, it now focuses on the training of managers and executives.

While in Turin, Mr. Boutros-Ghali met with Michel Hansenne, Director General of the ILO. After his return to Rome later in the day, the Secretary-General met with the President of the Italian Senate, Giovanni Spadolini.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) today launched an emergency airlift to supply some 50,000 people displaced by fierce fighting in the Kelbajar region of Azerbaijan, according to a statement issued by the UNHCR.

Over the next eight days, eight flights will carry blankets, tents and other supplies from Adana, Turkey, to Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, from where they will be distributed by truck, the statement said. In addition, 525 metric tons of wheat flour and 45 metric tons of oils will be delivered separately by road.

UNHCR has been aiding displaced people in Armenia and Azerbaijan since December 1992; its total budget for Azerbaijan is $5.8 million for around 150,000 people.

According to a letter to the Security Council from Azerbaijan, Armenian armed forces again violated Azerbaijani territory on the night of 10-11 April. The troops entered the Zangelan district and launched a major offensive towards the villages of Kyollugyshlag and Razdere. Armenia's aggression, in spite of the Council's call for an end to hostilities, was a matter of serious concern, the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan said in the letter to the Council President. He demanded that Armenia withdraw its forces and end the aggression.

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Cyprus has protested an incident last week in the buffer zone of Nicosia, at which a Greek National Guardsman was killed by a soldier serving with the Turkish occupation forces in Cyprus.

In a letter to the Secretary-General, the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations, A. J. Jacovides, said the tragic event underlines the need of maintaining the United Nations Peace-keeping Force (UNFICYP) on the island. The incident could affect the negotiations on a solution of the Cyprus problem which are scheduled to resume at Headquarters on 24 May.

The protest comes as the Security Council is discussing the future of UNFICYP, which is marred by severe financial problems. The force, which was established in 1964, is currently owed $204 million -- a situation described by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali as "highly unsatisfactory". In a recent letter to all United Nations member States, the Secretary-General stressed the vital peace-keeping role of UNFICYP and appealed for voluntary financial contributions.

UNFICYP's current mandate expires on 15 June.

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The Party of Democratic Kampuchea has allegedly left its compound in Phnom Penh due to security considerations. According to a spokesman for the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), an unsigned telegram had been received in which Khieu Samphan, the head of the Party, stated that due to the question of security, he and his staff were compelled to leave their compound in Phnom Penh.

The spokesman stated that UNTAC was willing to provide for the security of the Party of Democratic Kampuchea if this was indeed the reason for its leaving Phnom Penh.

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The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has launched an extended appeal for Rwanda, warning that 900,000 displaced people there are facing a major humanitarian catastrophe.

According to a statement issued by the ICRC in Geneva, the people that fled fighting between the Rwandan armed forces and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) are dependant on outside aid for survival. Famine is imminent in the country and severe levels of malnutrition have already been detected in children under five.

The ICRC has increased its 1993 budget for Rwanda from 15.7 million Swiss francs to 127.5 million, the statement said. It is the ICRC's biggest relief action in Africa after Somalia and accounts for almost 30 per cent of the organization's total expenditure on the African continent this year.

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